

Minutes from a Meeting of the Concordia Council on Student Life, held on Friday, 17 February 1995, 10 a.m., Room 131, Administration Building, Loyola Campus.

**Present:** Dr. D.L. Boisvert, Chair; Mr. B. Counihan, Mr. H. Zarins, Dr. S.M. Graub; Ms. N. Torbit; Mr. C. Macdonald; Ms. A. Robinson; Mr. R. Côté; Ms. D. Cooper; Ms. C. Fortier; Ms. L. Grimes; Mr. D. Elison; Ms. J. Murray; Mr. M. Cambridge; Ms. L. Lipscombe; Mr. S. Zacharias; Ms. A. Vroom; J. Chegrinec, secretary.

**Absent with Regrets:** Ms. A. Kerby; Ms. K. Hedrich; Dr. I.M. Barlow; Dr. R. Bonin; Mr. B. Smart; Ms. A. Shorter, Mr. D. Bobker, Mr. D. Leibu.

**Guest:** Ms. D. Gleason, Student Accounts, replacing Ms. K. Hedrich.  
Dr. A. Hochstein, Associate Vice-Rector, Academic.

1. Approval of agenda: On a motion by Ms. C. Fortier, seconded by Ms. N. Torbit, the agenda was approved.
2. Remarks from the Chair: Dr. Boisvert, Chair of the Student Services Review Committee, informed Council that he expects to table the final report in the fall. An interim report will be tabled at Council in May.

Dr. Boisvert welcomed Ms. Ann Vroom, Director, Alumni Affairs, as a permanent observer to CCSL.

Birthday wishes were extended to Mr. Counihan and Ms. Cooper.

3. Approval of Minutes from 20 January 1995: On a motion by Ms. Murray, seconded by Mr. Zacharias, the minutes were approved.
4. Business Arising from the Minutes:
  - a) **Task Force on Child Care Issues:** Ms. Kerby was unavailable because of illness; this item will be tabled for the meeting of 17 March 1995.
  - b) **Other:** The secretary was asked to remind the University Registrar that he had agreed to supply enrolment trend statistics to Council.
5. Report from the Planning & Resource Committee: Mr. Zarins explained that the student representatives had been unable to attend a scheduled meeting. The Co-chairs met and decided that student input was a necessity in order to continue, and the meeting will be rescheduled.
8. New Business:

The Quality of Teaching (Invited Guest: Dr. Alan Hochstein, Associate Vice-

Rector, Academic (Curriculum & Planning): This item was moved up on the agenda. Dr. Boisvert provided a brief background to this issue, explaining that a number of questions were asked by students on the status of a report prepared by Prof. B. MacKay and, subsequently, the Task Force on the Teaching Dossier, chaired by Dr. R. Smith, which made recommendations based on the report. He suggested that Dr. Hochstein respond to these concerns and then answer questions. This was agreeable to Dr. Hochstein, and he advised Council that Dr. Smith's report had been tabled at the Academic Programmes Committee. The Committee wanted Faculty Council input and consequently the report was forwarded and, to date, most Faculties have responded. Comments and suggestions forthcoming from these consultations have been incorporated into the report, and the deadline of end of term has been placed on forwarding the document to Senate.

Dr. Hochstein indicated that some Faculties have already begun to implement some of the recommendations, particularly the Faculty of Commerce and Administration, which have given the responsibility of teaching quality to someone on their decanal team. Dr. Hochstein did say that the reports recommendations are limited to the senior management level of the Faculty, and have yet to be implemented at the level of individual professors.

Questions: Mr. Zacharias said that he thought the intention was to have a "grass roots" report. Dr. Hochstein replied that several of the recommendations required more work within the Faculties. The Deans have been given a lot of responsibility, and it will take time to implement these recommendations down to the department level and install the mechanisms necessary to monitor the process.

He suggested that an Associate Vice-Rector, Academic position could be established, with the appropriate title. The individual would be responsible for the quality of teaching and reporting regularly on the implementation of the report.

In response to a question on the quality of education in general, Dr. Hochstein asked that Council invite him back next year and question him on what has been implemented from the report, and what the results have been.

Mr. Elison asked if it would be possible to see how students have evaluated teachers, to which Dr. Hochstein responded that this practice is currently underway in Commerce and Administration. He said though, that this was a Faculty Council decision, and the student representatives on the various Faculty Councils should table the request.

Ms. Fortier inquired about what steps students can take to express dissatisfaction with a professor at the beginning of a course. Dr. Hochstein



said that the usual approach would be to change courses, but he went on to say that there is a recommendation that instructors not be hired unless a paper has been presented, or a class taught, before students. This motion has yet to be passed at Senate. Dr. Boisvert also suggested contacting the Chair of the department to report complaints.

Mr. Elison asked if it was possible to limit the amount of TBA's which are listed in the calendar. Dr. Hochstein replied that he thought this was a matter of timing between listing courses and deciding how many professors would be required. Once again, this would appear to be an issue better addressed by Faculty Councils. Mr. Cambridge also expressed his frustration at the amount of TBA's, and Mr. Counihan said that it could be a problem of the timing necessary to publish the schedule. The secretary will ask Mr. Smart to respond to these concerns.

Mr. Zacharias expressed his frustration at what appeared to be the inability of the University to correct specific student concerns because of union constraints. He suggested that teachers be evaluated, by other teachers, during class periods on a regular basis. Dr. Hochstein said that mechanisms are being put in place which would require all new faculty members to take a course in Learning Development within two years of their hire. Mr. Zacharias pointed out though, that the students complaints were not about new professors, but the majority of the complaints were received about the quality of teaching of tenured professors. Dr. Hochstein expressed the opinion that he doubted whether anything could be done in that area.

Mr. Elison asked if students could be asked to sit on tenure hearing boards, or input from students could be sought on tenure candidates prior to the hearing. Dr. Hochstein thought this would be a good suggestion.

Dr. Hochstein concluded by telling Council that in order to implement mechanisms to evaluate and maintain good teaching, the initiative had to come from students. The message would be that much more powerful if delivered by students, especially at Faculty Councils.

On behalf of CCSL, Dr. Boisvert thanked Dr. Hochstein for his presentation to Council.

## 6. Student Life Issues

**Report from Ms. L. Lipscombe, Director, Bookstores** - Ms. Lipscombe began her presentation by telling Council that recently a number of student groups across the country have become more vocal in expressing their dissatisfaction with the rising cost of textbooks. The publishers are getting nervous about this increase and asked her to tell the students on CCSL that they would like

to address these concerns in a symposium. Ms. Lipscombe sees this as a positive step.

Mr. Counihan, Mr. Zacharias, Ms. Grimes, Mr. Côté, Ms. Robinson and Dr. Boisvert addressed this item. Questions were asked about Ms. Lipscombe's written report.

Ms. Lipscombe said that the enormous increase in the cost of paper in the U.S. is of major concern in Canada. She went on to explain that in Canada the publishers are not interested in the textbook market. It's easy to negotiate on best-sellers, but in textbooks the margin is always the same, whether you buy 1 or 5,000 copies.

An explanation was given by Ms. Lipscombe on JEP, and the costs incurred due to this process. She said that rising expenses have resulted in the bookstore becoming more entrepreneurial. Every year the bookstore is required to limit the bottom line but not affect the margin.

Ms. Grimes agreed that a national symposium would be a good idea, but sees it as more of a long-term solution; students are concerned right now. She asked how a textbook is accepted. Ms. Lipscombe explained that faculty members are approached by publishing companies to produce a text. Desk copies of these texts are sent to other professors in the field with the hope that it will be utilized in their courses. The Ministry of Education does not regulate the book lists of university professors as it does in elementary schools and CEGEPS. Ms. Grimes asked if it would be to anyone's advantage to nationalize textbooks so that one book could be used across the country. Ms. Lipscombe felt that she was unable to answer this question, as she isn't an authority on the publishing by-laws, but she reiterated that this is the kind of thing that the publishers want to have the opportunity to address at an open meeting. Issues of academic freedom would be involved.

Ms. Robinson was informed that if professors are selling photocopies in class they are breaking copy-right laws. On the issue of university presses, Ms. Lipscombe responded that many university presses are finding it more feasible to hand over what they use to produce to other agencies to distribute and market. She also remarked that a lot of publishers are heavily subsidized by the government.

Ms. Grimes agreed to discuss further with Ms. Lipscombe the idea of a symposium, but stated that the main concern was to make life a little easier for students now. She continued by asking if it was possible to change the designation of the bookstore from ancillary so it can break even without having to make a profit.



Dr. Boisvert thought that the bookstore fell under government funding regulations, in which certain services are designated ancillary.

Ms. Lipscombe said that the Bookstore hires students as cashiers and casual summer loaders. She would have to check the CUSSU guidelines to ascertain whether she could convert some positions so as to enable the hiring of more students. On the issue of formalizing the line of credit available to students from the bookstore, Ms. Lipscombe agreed, and her and Ms. Grimes will contact Mr. Côté immediately to arrange it.

Dr. Boisvert thanked Ms. Lipscombe for an excellent report.

#### **Other Issues:**

**Enrolment** - Ms. Fortier asked that the University Registrar be asked to table at CCSL the recruitment plan that he mentioned at the previous meeting. She would like to have it explained how the recruitment plan will be implemented since the Liaison Department has become part of the Faculty specific teams.

#### **Computer Labs:**

Ms. Robinson complained about the downtown computer labs. She said there were 20 wordperfect applications and one printer. Also the computers downtown are not compatible with the Loyola Campus computers. J. Chegrinec will ask Mr. Woodrow, Director of Computing Services, to respond.

#### **24-hour Study Space:**

In a recent meeting with students, Dr. Bertrand, Interim Rector/Vice-Rector, Services agreed with the suggestion of having 24-hour study space.

#### **1995-96 Budget:**

Ms. Grimes suggested that CCSL should make a symbolic statement of support for the University in attempting to cut its budget by \$10 million for 1995-96 by refraining from ordering coffee or refreshments for its meetings.

The following motion was then introduced by Mr. Elison and seconded by Mr. Counihan:

**WHEREAS** the Concordia Council on Student Life has agreed no longer to supply refreshments at its meetings, Council asks that the University refrain from serving any refreshments at committee meetings held at the University.

Mr. Cambridge, Ms. Fortier, Mr. Côté, Ms. Grimes, Ms. Murray, Ms. Torbit and Mr. Counihan addressed this item.

It was asked how much would actually be saved versus the damage that could be done to morale. It was suggested that other areas could be looked into, such as annual memberships.

It was agreed that it was important to send a symbolic message to other groups, but CCSL could also look at other cost cutting methods, such as the Directors refraining from putting their reports in separate folders.

Other members expressed the point that although CCSL can make decisions on issues which concern Council, they felt uncomfortable telling other groups what they should or shouldn't do about serving coffee.

It was pointed out that the rebate the University receives from Marriott is quite substantial, and insistence on this motion could result in a loss of funds to the University.

On a vote of 10 in favour; 2 opposed and 1 abstention, the motion was passed.

#### **Mandatory ID's on Shuttle Buses:**

Mr. Elison tabled this item, after verification made by the Chair that the discussion would not touch upon, in anyway, any formal procedures which may presently be underway.

Mr. Elison distributed the chapter, Rights and Responsibilities from the undergraduate calendar and drew attention to section 17.2 #2.

*All members of the University must be free to pursue their work, study, creative activity or research without undue interference. This includes freedom from any form of violence, harassment or intimidation; freedom to teach, to create and to learn; to speak freely; to associate and to assemble; to write and to publish. All members have the right to the safeguard of their dignity, reputation and honour, confidentiality of personal information, respect for property whether personal or owned by the University and access to University premises as required.*

Mr. Elison's contention is that the newly implemented policy of requesting that University ID's be produced in order to board the shuttle buses is in violation of the above article. He also said that a letter has been received from a female student who was not allowed on the shuttle bus at night from Loyola, because she didn't have her ID.



The following motion was tabled by Mr. Ellison, and seconded by Ms. Grimes:

**BE IT RECOMMENDED THAT** in order to board the shuttle bus the Concordia Shuttle Bus Services not limit proof of attendance at the University to identification cards only, but that proof of attendance be extended to include course outlines, transcripts, contracts, or any other agreed upon form of identification.

Ms. Murray, Mr. Zacharias, Dr. Boisvert, Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Counihan, Ms. Grimes, Ms. Torbit and Mr. Ellison spoke to the motion.

A number of examples were provided on students being denied access to the shuttle buses because of the lack of an official I.D. It was asked to what extent the buses were being utilized by non-Concordia people, and if it was enough to warrant the introduction of a practice that the students find frustrating and bordering on harassment.

It was pointed out that some of the departments, such as Libraries and Audio-Visual, require that an I.D. be left with them when equipment is rented. The introduction of issuing a special pass has proven to be ineffective and frustrating, since it is difficult to find someone in the Transportation Office to prepare the pass.

The cost of \$10 to replace a lost ID card was considered too high, and a suggestion was made to lower it.

The motion was voted on with the following results: in favour - 7; opposed - 6; abstention - 0. The motion was carried.

#### **Varia -**

Ms. Murray described a frustrating situation she had in attempting to make a course change. She was sent on numerous trips between departments and the Birks Student Service Centre. She wondered if the Registrar could implement a programme with the Faculties which would result in increased interaction between the departments and the Birks Student Service Centre which would eliminate the present cycle of not only misinformation but totally incorrect instructions being given to students.

Mr. Ellison supported Ms. Murray's request and emphasized that the process of changing programmes "is a nightmare".

#### **7. Reports from Directors:**

Roger Côté, Director, Financial Aid & Awards - Mr. Côté was the Director

chosen to address Council at this meeting. Briefly he addressed the folders which had previously been delivered to each member of Council. Included in the folders were the numerous handouts, booklets and documents that Financial Aid & Awards has available for students. He reported that a significant number of students rely on financial aid and he sees that number increasing in the coming years. Mr. Côté, in addressing the article published in The Link regarding emergency loans, informed Council that he has written to the editors correcting the information reported. The department has not stopped supplying emergency loans, and they have given out 490 this year.

#### Questions:

Mr. Zacharias asked to see the statistics about the system of grading used in the work study programme, and whether or not the A-level of need received more jobs. Mr. Côté will supply this information.

Mr. Côté, responding to a further question by Mr. Zacharias on employment of students, replied that the department does hire part-time students, but there is not a lot of student employment in his area.

Ms. Robinson asked who decides the criteria necessary to qualify for loans and bursaries. Mr. Côté responded that it's the provincial government that sets the guidelines on need, and there are a number of variable. He agreed that the balance sheet wasn't fair and many students were not eligible for loans, under the present system, although they perhaps should be. He continued by saying that the government is constantly being criticized for its loans and bursaries policies that haven't been examined since 1989. He suggested that this would be the best time for students to have an impact since the Minister appears to be listening more to student input than to the institutions. Mr. Côté also said that the University provides limited assistance to scholarships and bursaries.

Ms. Grimes talked about the concerns that have been expressed by students on the lack of privacy in the department. Students have to discuss personal issues in an open area and a number have complained about feeling uncomfortable with the situation. Mr. Côté responded that the department was aware of the problem and were making arrangements to change the configuration by the summer.

Mr. Zacharias asked about the process involved and described a scenario where a student had received a student loan, had never cashed it, and continues to be "harassed" by Student Accounts. Mr. Côté explained that when a student asks for a loan they are given a voucher which they hand into Student Accounts. If for some reason the person the voucher was issued to is not the one who cashes it in, the initial person is held responsible. He



volunteered to meet with the student to discuss the situation.

Mr. Zacharias also asked why McGill offers a much larger amount of work study positions than Concordia does. Mr. Côté said that 240 jobs are offered at Concordia and they go very quickly; he will follow-up on why McGill has so many more offerings.

Ms. Robinson outlined a problem she had attempting to get an answer to what she perceived to be a fairly straight-forward question. Again, Mr. Côté will follow-up with his staff.

On behalf of CCSL, Dr. Boisvert thanked Mr. Côté for his presentation.

**Next month's presentation** - Mr. B. Counihan, Dean of Students, was designated as the reporting Director for the meeting of 17 March. A specific issue that Council would like to have addressed is the future of the residences.

#### 8. New Business

Ms. Vroom expressed her pleasure at having been appointed a permanent observer to Council. She said that a major goal of the Office of Alumni Affairs was to forge links with the students, who would eventually become alumnus. Ms. Vroom told Council about the mentor programme which has been in operation for four years. The programme matches students with alumni in the business world. At the present time there are more alumni available than there are students; she feels this is probably due to a lack of communication. Council members were encouraged to tell students about this opportunity and advise them to contact the Office of Alumni Affairs to fill out an application form.

The Office is presently working with CAPS on the Career Fair; as well, plans are well underway for the Graduation Finale which will follow convocation on 9 June 1995. This event is jointly sponsored by the Office of Alumni Affairs and the Office of the Rector.

Finally, Ms. Vroom announced that the Office has resources available, through the Affinity Card monies, to support projects which would enhance student life. Applications forms can be filled out in the Office. A meeting will be held 7 March to review and recommend on the applications. Also the Concordia University Alumni Association sets aside, each year, a small amount of money to help support student projects.

9. Next Meeting:

The next meeting will be held Friday, 17 March 1995 at 10:00 a.m. in the Hall Building, room 771.

10. Termination of Meeting:

On a motion by Mr. Elison and seconded by Ms. Torbit, the meeting terminated at 12:15. .